**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Town Hall ~ March 29, 2018**

**Sturbridge, MA**

**Call to Order:**

The Finance Committee chair called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:00pm. The following committee members were present: Kathy Neal (KN), Joni Light (JL), James Waddick (JW), Mike Hager (MH), and Larry Morrison (LM). Michael Serio (MS), Jared Burns (JB) arrived at 7:37pm. Absent: Bruce Bryson (BB), Karen Davis (KD)

Guests: Jean Bubon (JBu), Town Planner/Zoning Board of Appeals; Tom Chamberland (TC), Tree Warden; Nelson Burlingame (NB), Building Inspector

**Review of Fiscal Year 2019 Planning Budget and Zoning Board of Appeals**

MH presented the budgets for Town Planner/Zoning Board of Appeals as essentially level funded. JW questioned the item General Code-Codification. JBu explained that this is a service to clean up bylaws, check for redundancies, stylistic errors, evaluate for legal issues and make the bylaws flow as it should. There is an annual fee to maintain the bylaws once completed. MH stated that it would clean up other issues as well: general bylaw errors happen and erroneous information has been given. JB will work to clean up the zoning bylaws on her own if this is not approved. Discussion followed regarding other towns that are using this type of service; its value to other departments in the town; and the time and cost to do it in-house. LM moved the motion to change the item General Code-Codification from 0 to $8,244. JW seconds. MH stated that it makes sense to provide the service to all departments and not limit this to the Zoning Department; he questioned the cost to expand the service to a broader scope. LM agreed. LM withdrew the motion to change this item. JW withdraws his second. MH asked what is on the horizon for the Planning Board. JBu said that the department has been extremely busy. She mentioned a number of projects that have been recently approved or are in the planning or building stages.

MH stated that there is nothing new requested in the Zoning Board of Appeals budget.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2019 Tree Warden Budget and Trails Committee Budget**

TC presented the budget for the Tree Warden. He stated that tree warden is a stipend position, that he has worked with the Town Administrator to create a job description and that the job has been classified. TC stated that this Arbor Day will mark the thirtieth consecutive year that Sturbridge is recognized as Tree City USA. TC said that the only increase in the budget is the contract tree rate which increases annually. KN asked how many trees the budget allows to be removed. TC stated that there are variables which can slow down the crew but usually two trees per day if they are large trees or six per day if they are smaller. TC said that it is normal for the department to carry over a short list of 6-8 trees per year.

TC stated that they Gypsy Moth infestation of the past few years has left many dead limbs but when the trees leaf out in the spring he will know how many trees are affected this year. KN asked if the moths will be back this year. TC said that there are many factors that led him to be hopeful that they would not, and that he hoped to see some recovery of trees this year. MH asked if the budget was enough to take care of the issues faced in a year. TC stated that he thought so but would be back for an increase if the Gypsy Moths come back. MH asked if the highway department can help with tree work or if all work is done by the tree company. TC stated what he and the highway department work closely and some of the work is done by the town; however, the town does not have a bucket truck which limits its ability to take down trees. TC said that the town crews do what they can.

LM inquired about the ash tree removal and treatment line items-if there is evidence or increased evidence of the emerald ash borer. TC stated that he uses three to five traps throughout town to detect/trap emerald ash borers during the active period; as yet, none have been picked up in a trap.

MH asked if the Betterment budget supplemented the Tree Warden’s budget. TC stated he asks Betterment annually for funds.

TC stated that Trails Committee Budget was increased to cover the opportunity to send two trail committee members to training in Syracuse, NY. TC stated that the Trails Committee consists of a good group of volunteers and that equipment is key to the productivity of the volunteers. JL questioned if the shed and hand tools are in the Betterment budget. TC stated that these have been funded. JL asked about the request for a tractor; TC said that this is not funded. JL asked about the grader which was funded. TC explained the use of the grader to maintain the trails. MH stated that the volunteers make the trails possible. TC stated that there are many projects underway. KN asked about cross country skiing; TC said that perhaps he would ask for equipment to compact the trails for cross country skiing in next year’s budget.

**Review of Fiscal Year 2019 Building Inspector Budget**

MH explained that the building inspector budget is basically level funded with the exception of salary. NB stated that the department could use more help because the state is mandating more reviews and inspections. KN asked if there was anything new in the budget. NB said nothing new. MH stated that the electrical and plumbing inspectors have increased budget due to volume and that there have been changes made in fees to cover the increase. NB stated that the fees are based on square footage.

MH asked about the warrant article for $100,000. NB said that it is funding to take unsafe buildings down. The Town will then place a lien on the property which will take three to five years to recover.

NB handed the committee members a list of current projects in town. KN asked about the big projects coming up. NB stated that the market is coming up, the building department is business friendly, and that permits keep increasing.

**Line Item Budget Review**

The following line items were reviewed for Board of Assessors. The motion was moved to accept by MH.

**Line: Account: Board of Assessors**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 16 | 11412-52000 | Purchase of Services | $29,650.00 | MH; JL seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 17 | 11412-54000 | Supplies | $1,700.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 18 | 11412-57000 | Other Charges | $1,380.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $32,730.00 |  |  |  |

The following line items were reviewed for Town Clerk. The motion was moved to accept by JW.

 **Line: Account: Town Clerk**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 29 |  11612-52000 | Purchase of Services | $826.00 | JW; MH seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
| 30 | 11612-54000 | Supplies | $1,400.00 | JW; MH seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
| 31 | 11612-57000 | Other Charges | $1,000.00 | JW; MH seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $3,226.00 |  |

The following line items were reviewed for Elections & Registration. The motion was moved to accept by JW.

**Line: Account: Elections & Registration**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 32 | 11621 | Personnel Costs | $14,300.00 | JW: MH seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| 33 | 11622-52000 | Purchase of Services | $13,732.00 | JW: MH seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
| 34 | 11622-54000 | Supplies | $1,800.00 | JW: MH seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $15,532.00 |   |

 **Elections & Registration Total $29,832.00**

The following line items were reviewed for Recreation. The motion was moved to accept by JB.

**Line: Account: Recreation**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 127 | 16302-52000 | Purchase of Services | $10,045.00 | JB: JL seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
| 128 | 16302-54000 | Supplies | $2,680.00 | JB: JL seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
| 129 | 16302-56320 | Team Sports | $7,500.00 | JB: JL seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
| 130 | 16302-57000 | Other Charges | $210.00 | JB: JL seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $20,435.00 |   |

 MH explained to MS and JB that there was an opportunity presented by the JBu to clean up the bylaws and that JBu was going to explore the cost to include general bylaws. Therefore, Purchase of Services would not be voted on but the other line items would be.

The following line items were reviewed for Town Planner. The motion was moved to accept by MH.

**Line: Account: Town Planner**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 41 | 11752-54000 | Supplies | $3,400.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
| 42 | 11752-56000 | Intergovernmental | $2,590.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
| 43 | 11752-57000 | Other Charges | $938.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $6,928.00 |   |

The following line items were reviewed for Tree Warden. The motion was moved to accept by MH.

**Line: Account: Tree Warden**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 85 | 12942-52000 | Purchase of Services | $16,131.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 6-1-0 (JL opposed). |
| 86 | 12942-54000 | Supplies | $675.00 | MH: JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 87 | 12942-57000 | Other Charges | $1,125.00 | MH: JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $17,931.00 |   |

The following line items were reviewed for Trails Committee. The motion was moved to accept by MH.

**Line: Account: Trails Committee**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 131 | 16502-52000 | Purchase of Services | $1,000.00 | MH: JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 132 | 16502-57000 | Other Charges | $1,140.00 | MH: JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $2,140.00 |   |

 **Trail Committee Total** $2,140.00

The following line items were reviewed for Building Inspector. The motion was moved to accept by MH.

**Line: Account: Building Inspector**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 76 | 12412-52000 | Purchase of Services | $1,620.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 77 | 12412-54000 | Supplies | $1,600.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 78 | 12412-57000 | Other Charges | $700.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $3,920.00 |   |

The following line items were reviewed for Sealer of Weights and Measures. The motion was moved to accept by MH.

**Line: Account: Sealer of Weights and Measures**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 79 | 12442-52000 | Purchase of Services | $5,350.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7.00 |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $5,350.00 |   |

 **Sealer of Weights & Measures Total** $5,350.00

The following line items were reviewed for Inspectors (Electric and Plumbing). The motion was moved to accept by MH.

**Line: Account: Inspectors (Electric and Plumbing)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 80 |   | Personnel Costs | $55,000.00 |   |
|   |   |   |  |   |
| 81 | 12452-52000 | Purchase of Services | $300.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 82 | 12452-54000 | Supplies | $500.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 83 | 12452-57000 | Other Charges | $2,465.00 | MH; JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $3,265.00 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |  **Inspectors Total** | $58,265.00 |   |

The following line items were reviewed for Finance Committee. The motion was moved to accept by KN.

 **Line: Account: Finance Committee**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 8 | 11312 | Personnel Costs | $3,468.00 | KN; JB seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
|   |  |  |   |   |
| 9 | 11312-52000 | Purchase of Services | $3,400.00 | KN; JB seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
| 10 | 11312-57000 | Other Charges | $200.00 | KN; JB seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0. |
|   |   | Total Expenses | $3,600.00 |   |

 **Finance Committee Total** $7,068.00

 ***This salary is for the Recording Secretary and not any Finance Committee members.***

There was discussion between KN, LM, JL and MS regarding the Town Moderator budget. JL will check with Barbara Barry.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

JW moved the motion to accept the minutes from March 20, 2018. MH seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0.

MH moved the motion to accept the minutes from March 24, 2018 as amended. JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0.

**New Business**

JW made a few comments concerning the square footage in the new buildings listed in the handout that NB had given the committee.

**No Old Business**

**No Public Access**

JB moved the motion to adjourn at 8:52pm. JW seconds. Motion accepted 7-0-0 and meeting adjourned.

/jme